

~~Top Secret~~

POLAND: Threats by the Government

The government--in an effort to head off the 15-minute strike and one-minute traffic halt called for tomorrow by Solidarity activists--yesterday warned that it would deal firmly with any violation of martial law.

The authorities issued a similar warning before sending the police against demonstrators on 3 May. Workers in factories under military control could face summary trials and stiff penalties if they participate in the strike. [redacted] claims that factory managers are reminding workers that violations could carry the death penalty and that more factories might be brought under military control. [redacted]

As a further deterrent, the government announced that it had arrested almost 2,300 people during the riots last week and interned 211. It said that disciplinary measures also would be taken against high school and college students. Meanwhile, the Polish party daily criticized Western newsmen for circulating information about opposition activities and conducting a coordinated political campaign aimed at inciting social unrest. [redacted]

Comment: The strike will show whether the increased rebelliousness shown by youth has spread to the factories. More workers probably will participate in acts of defiance than during previous monthly anniversaries of the imposition of martial law. News about participation in the strike is likely to be partially suppressed by the authorities, however, and the regime probably will assert that most factories did not heed the call of "antisocialists" and "foreign provocateurs." [redacted]

Violence, which some in the government may seek to promote, is most likely if the authorities use direct force to stop the brief strike or take punitive measures against individual workers. Even if the response from workers is weak this time, their grievances remain and Solidarity activists will continue their organizational efforts. [redacted]

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